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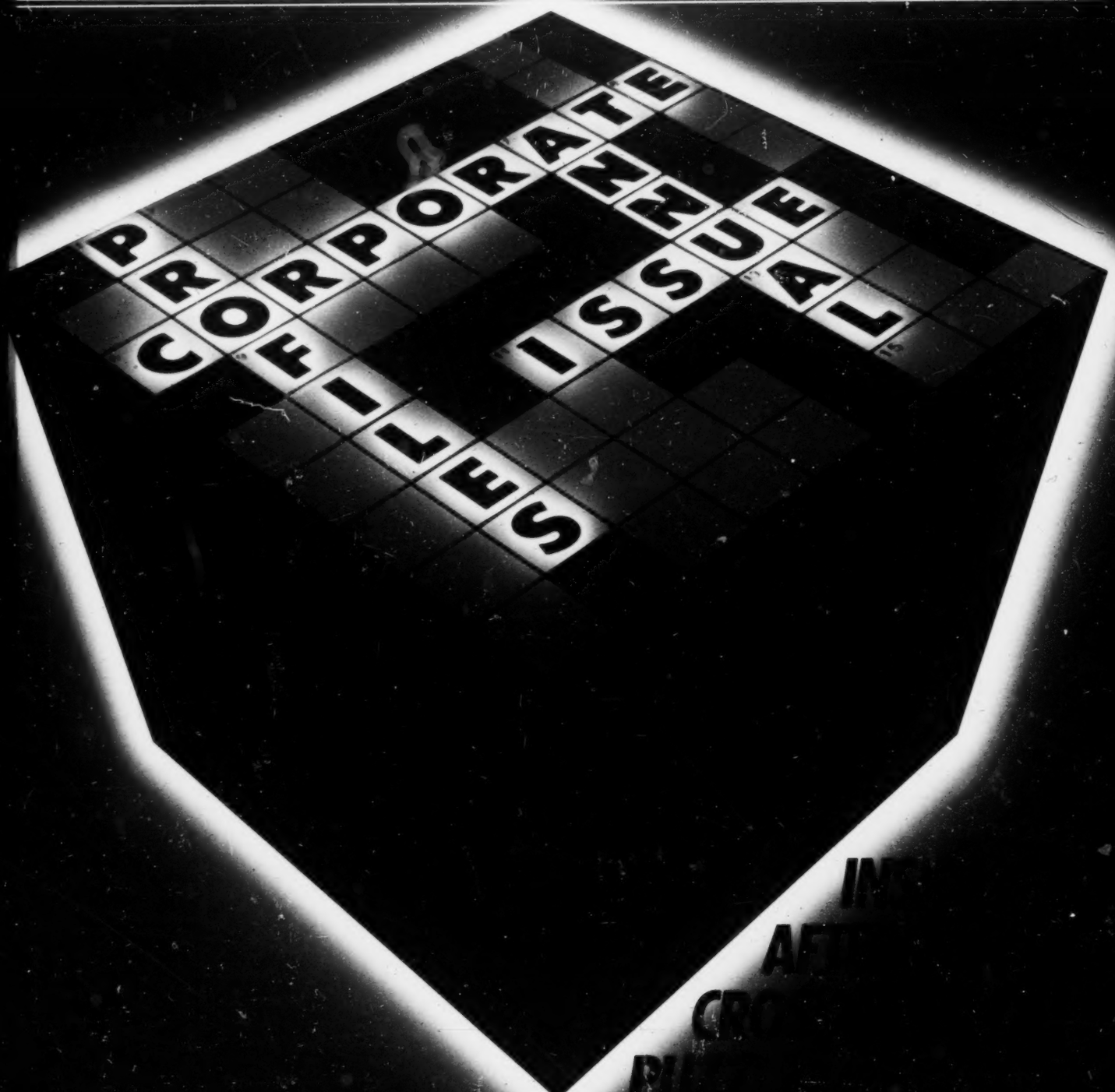
Chilton's

AUTOMOTIVE MARKETING

The Marketing/Business Magazine For The Retail Aftermarket

DECEMBER 1987



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PUBLISHER'S NOTES

PARTNERS AND A PUZZLE

Partners turned out to be the key word as we developed this Corporate Profiles issue.

As we worked with industry suppliers in developing their profiles, they used the word "partners" time and time again.

In what context?

Actually, in two. First, in the context of partners at the supplier level. Partnership is evident, too, in marketing collaborations like that of Dorman and Champion Spark Plug. And partnership is evident in terms of the automotive parts retailers as partners with their suppliers in providing parts, chemicals, and accessories to the DIYer.

It's increasingly evident that we all must work together—as partners—to keep the retail aftermarket strong, viable, and profitable.

Life shouldn't be all business, though; so we've added one element of entertainment to this issue—our first *Automotive Marketing* aftermarket crossword puzzle. You can find the answers in the profiles themselves. Have a good time!

And accept our wishes for a most pleasant holiday season, and our pledge of support to help you continue to enjoy aftermarket profits for the coming year. We at *Automotive Marketing* appreciate your continuing interest and support. ■

Sarah Frankson, Publisher

IN-STORE FOCUS

TEAM CAR CARE WAREHOUSE
Headquarters: 9300 E. Hampton Dr., Capitol Heights, MD 20743
(301) 350-7150
Stores: 3
Total Sales: NA/new
Average SKUs: 18,000
Founded: 1986

Jim Gauntlett, president of this newly formed chain, believes that his stores-within-a-store concept is the first of its kind in the aftermarket.

"Here's the game plan," he said, outlining his strategy. "Instead of looking the same, each department is a store in itself, functioning as a distinct separate area, even though they're in the same store."

Gauntlett said the idea is working well in the chain's first five outlets, the first of which, in Pasadena, MD, had its grand opening in September.

Here's how the idea works: Each outlet is basically square in shape and has 6,500 sq. ft. divided into three distinct sections, or "stores." The largest section, located at the front of the store and stretching its width, is the DIY area, and consists of products such as car mats, hoses, fan belts, oil, chemicals, filters, seat covers, and so forth. Each DIY department has color-coded signs.

Much attention was given to the performance corner, set in the left rear of the chain's stores. Designed in a racing motif, it features dropped ceilings, giving a "boutique look." A bright mirror-like material, black and red striped gondolas, black and white checkerboard floors, and end-caps and displays lit by halogen spotlights complete the setting.

The rest is what Gauntlett calls a jobber parts store. Parts displays stretch from floor to ceiling, adding to the wholesale atmosphere.

Each outlet also features an L-shaped wrap around parts counter, which guides the customers from the DIY section back to the hard parts area.

"Walking into one of our outlets is like walking into a department store," said Gauntlett. "That's what it's meant to be."

To complete the scene, employees are dressed in color-coordinated uniforms that match the motif of the stores. Management personnel dress in black pants, a white shirt, and a red tie that says "team." General help wears black pants and a red shirt; cashiers wear black smocks. Badges are brass name tags embossed in black.

Each store front features a red stripe which comes up the sides of the double doors and across their tops, tying in with the red racing stripe motif; this gives what Gauntlett calls the "McDonald's image"—a clearly identifiable graphic for the consumer to look for.

Investment for the first Team Car Care Warehouse units has been considerable, but Gauntlett is cagey about how considerable. He won't comment, either, on when he expects to achieve a return on investment. The chain is a division of G&M Performance Parts, Capitol Heights, MD.

Gauntlett obviously has a great deal of backing, personally and financially, from the parent company, but he prefers not to talk about budget details. But he will talk about the stores themselves and what they provide the consumer.

"I believe the industry deserves a quality store staffed with quality people and quality merchandise," he said.

He is very proud of his staff, and hopes eliminate high employee turnover. "Let's just say we offer an unusually attractive benefits package," he said.

The stores function with a high-tech computerized electronic parts catalog and POS system; parts are ordered from three G&M warehouses (Washington, DC, Norfolk, VA, and Greensboro, SC). "We have a special order program that delivers within 24 hours," explained Gauntlett. "So although each outlet stocks 18,000 SKUs, the consumer is actually picking from 60,000 available items."

Who is this consumer?

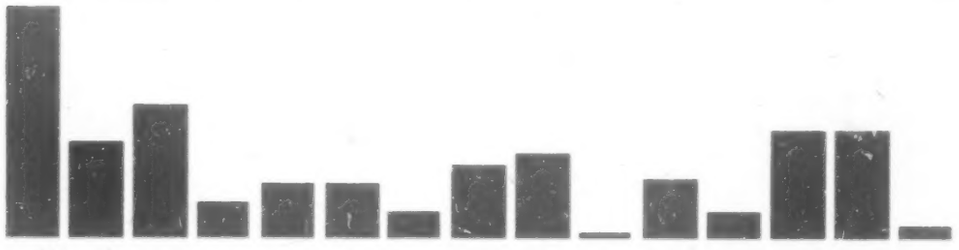
"We don't just want an ad-only customer," said Gauntlett. "Advertising alone does not mean aggressive retailing; it just generates an ad budget. We want the discretionary income guy. I want the kid who spends $8,000 on a stereo for his pickup truck; the guy who needs racing parts and a full gamut of accessories."

It's too soon to tell whether he will succeed. But early customer response is heartening, he said. "We're looking to open a minimum of eight to ten stores a year in the Maryland-Virginia area," he said. At press time he had six signed leases and was aggressively building an empire.

PROFILE: DIYers WHO DON'T BUY AFTERMARKET PRODUCTS

Drawing from the 1987 *Automotive Marketing Consumer Automotive Repair Study*, we look at DIYers who say they are responsible for maintaining a car and do some work on the car themselves, but didn't actually buy any standard aftermarket products such as motor oil or antifreeze.

			Age					Income				Hours Per Month Spent On DIY			
Total	Male	Female	-25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55 +	-$20K	$20-30K	$30-40K	+ 40K	-1 Hrs	1-5 Hrs	6-10 Hrs	11 + Hrs
100.0%	42.1%	57.9%	15.8%	21.1%	18.4%	10.5%	31.6%	36.8%	2.6%	26.3%	10.5%	47.4%	47.4%	5.3%	0.0%



DETAIL

of all new vehicles sold in Texas are light trucks, but only 7% of the total U.S. population lives in Texas, according to *American Demographics*.